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Executive Registry

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18 June 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT: Collateral Activities Coordinating Group in Defense

1. For some time, as you know, we have been hearing about the "cold war" organization in Defense, but have not been able to find out much about it. During a recent tour of Army duty, I managed to get assigned to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs (Jack Irwin) with the job of looking into this organization (renamed the Collateral Activities Coordinating Group after the OCB expressed concern at the use of "cold war.")

2. General Conclusions

a. On detailed examination, I concluded (perhaps to my own surprise) that it really is not a bad idea, and that it should not prove unduly troublesome to us or to others. It does provide an opportunity for eager members of the Services to blow off steam, and establishes a mechanism for having their ideas considered and screened at a central point. If this central point functions properly, the rest of the community could be saved from a flood of impractical and unwise ideas.

b. The concept and proposed functioning of the Group should be thoroughly explained to other agencies and departments, probably through the OCB. The latter should make it clear to the Defense member that many of the ideas generated within this framework will require coordination outside Defense.

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c. The CACG is not supposed to get into covert operations. In actual practice a number of ideas submitted to it are of a covert nature or have covert ramifications, but I believe that ISA, which provides the secretariat, understands where the basic covert charter resides. How much influence ISA has in this connection is a question.

d. There is a tendency throughout the Defense establishment to submit through this mechanism ideas which are designed to solve global problems with broad decisive strokes. In most cases so far these proposals have been extremely elementary and oversimplified, and are usually outside any normal responsibility or charter Defense might have. (e.g., a detailed memorandum submitted to the Group from the JCS dealt with the discovery that the practical benefits which Soviet citizens receive are not entirely consistent with the theoretical promises of Marxist Communism, and urged that Defense should do something about exposing this fact.)

3. History of the Group

The thought of stimulating "cold war" ideas and considering them in a central committee within Defense was pretty much a brain child of Mr. Quarles. After the OCB objections to the words "cold war", the name was changed and the charter was submitted to Secretary McElroy (there was, and still is, a good deal of feeling of pique in the Pentagon against the OCB for forcing this change.) At the time of Quarles' death, McElroy was considering a charter but had already indicated some unhappiness with the name and with other details; it was not clear whether these objections were of substance or whether they were directed entirely toward what he conceived to be bureaucratic language. In any event, the major commands have been told of the general concept, and have been encouraged to submit ideas. Some have already been sent in.

Deputy Secretary Gates has now presided over one, or possibly two, meetings of the Group. I was invited to attend the first one but this was delayed until after my departure from the Pentagon. I am informed, however, that Gates has followed McElroy's rather than Quarles', lead and has questioned the entire concept. At the moment, the future of the Group and the direction it might take if it survives are a little in doubt.

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4. Charter

The so called "guiding principles" are described as follows:

a. Consistent with the primary mission, the Department of Defense technique in the cold war is ... to reinforce and support political, economic and other non-military efforts ... [must insure that awareness of this potential in DOD world-wide activities is created.]

b. Organization for this purpose should represent minimum change from existing structure, manning requirements, charters ... and make maximum use of existing command channels.

c. The Department of Defense ... should look to the OCB for direction, under broad guidance of NSC policies.

5. Organization and Function

a. The Group is chaired by Gates, with Irwin as vice-chairman. The ISA provides the secretariat. The members include: Senior representatives from: the Offices of the Secretaries of Army, Navy, Air Force, plus Marines; the Director of Defense Research and Engineering; Chairman of the JCS; Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs; Assistant Secretary for Health and Medical Affairs; Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (OSO). Others may be invited to appropriate meetings.

OSO (General Erskine) wanted to provide the secretariat but ISA won out. This function now resides in the Plans Division, ISA.

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The Group has met regularly, usually every three weeks, since January 1959. A number of projects have been considered and some of these have been pushed forward. It is interesting to note that the paper passed through this Group which has had perhaps the most impact on ourselves and State - that is the strong JCS-inspired objection to [redacted] was never screened at all. This came up through Air Force channels and was pushed to the Secretary of the Air Force and thence to Secretary Gates, who tabled it as "other business" at a CACG meeting. This avoided any advance consideration by ISA, OSO or others, which is supposed to be the practice. As you know, it resulted in part of the paper being hurriedly recalled after OSO had made strong representations against it.

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b. Quite apart from the Defense CACG, there is a Cold War Committee in the Navy, under the chairmanship of Admiral Miller, Assistant DCNO for Plans and Policy. Admiral Miller is proud of the informal nature of the operations of this Committee and particularly its readiness to by-pass established channels (particularly, but not exclusively, those not controlled by the Navy.) As an illustration of this, Miller wrote directly to a Marine battalion commander passing on an idea which had been rejected at SHAPE. I had a long talk with Miller, on the stipulation that the existence and functioning of the Navy committee was highly confidential and that I would keep it essentially to myself. I think anything really important emanating from this source would be passed through the CACG.

6. Miscellaneous

Attachment A gives details of the directive which had been put before Secretary McElroy by Quarles and which has been questioned by both McElroy and Gates. Attachment B is a list of all the projects which had come to the Group through normal channels (i.e., not handled in the manner of [redacted] as of the beginning of June. Attachment C is a not-very-profound pot-boiler which I wrote for the Director of Plans in JEA.

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THOMAS A. PARROTT

3 Attachments

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Projects submitted to the Collateral
Activities Coordinating Group as of 1 June 1959

1. Provision of medical care at U.S. military hospitals for important foreign personages.
2. Foreign military student institute.
3. Indoctrination program for Ecuadorian military conscripts.
4. Retention of U.S. bases in Morocco.
5. Exploitation of Berlin crisis as stimulus to greater NATO effort. (This one contemplated future interagency development after discussion within Defense. One of its principal recommendations involved the stimulation of popular unrest in East Germany. Mr. Quarles cautioned against this, when the paper came to his attention.)
6. Commemorative stamps.
7. Cold War Indoctrination of Military Personnel assigned overseas.
8. Safeguarding religious privileges against communistic encroachments.
9. Foreign language training.
10. Project "to expose Communist double talk."
 (This was submitted to the OCB)
12. Exploitation of Soviet social system vulnerabilities.
13. Exploitation of Soviet armed forces vulnerabilities.
14. Proposal to use military assistance as an instrument to obtain current U.S. objectives.
15. Use of bi-lingual high-level DOD officials for VOA broadcasts.

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**Proposed Functions of the Collateral Activities Coordinating
Group, as listed in the Draft Charter submitted to the
Secretary of Defense**

- (a) Develop and recommend DOD policy on collateral activities to the Secretary of Defense.
- (b) Recommend planning guidance to be issued by the Secretary of Defense for selected important collateral activities.
- (c) Identify opportunities for collateral activities and promote expeditious action thereon.
- (d) On a selective basis provide additional guidance on collateral activities which the DOD has agreed to undertake as a result of consultation with other governmental agencies and provide recommendations on collateral activities, as appropriate, for transmission by Secretary of Defense to other government agencies.
- (e) Promote exchange of information on collateral activities within the DOD and, as appropriate, with other governmental agencies.

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